(b) if so, the details of cooperation worked out between the two countries; and

(c) how the Ministry of Defence is going to be benefited from this agreement?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The 'Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and Government of the Republic of the Philippines concerning Defence Cooperation' was signed during the visit of Honourable President to Philippines in February 2006.

(b) The Agreement envisages enhanced defence cooperation in various fields for the mutual benefit of India and Philippines.

(c) An enhanced engagement and stronger defence cooperation with the Philippines which is an important member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), is in consonance with India's 'Look East policy' of closer ties with the countries of Southeast Asia.

Dhruv Crashes

†927. SHRI AJAY MAROO:
SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the helicopter 'Dhruv' manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. has often crashed at many places due to mechanical and technical defects prevailing in it;

(b) whether it is a fact that due to faults in design of the helicopter defects have been noted in the transmission and rotor of tail gear box;

(c) whether it is a fact that a number of countries including Israel have shown their hesitation to acquire 'Dhruv' helicopter after incidents of crash; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) there have been two incidents of forced landing of Dhruv helicopters so far.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

One-rank-one pension scheme

928. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether one-rank-one-pension scheme, aimed at bringing about equity amongst corresponding rank officers retiring from Armed Forces, has not been implemented fully;

(b) if so, which category and class of defence personnel still remain deprived of the benefits of the scheme; and

(c) how far the disparity in retirement benefits, like gratuity and pension payable to personnel retiring earlier than the cut off date (1996) still persists?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) A Group of Ministers (GOM) was constituted to look into the issue of 'one rank one pension'. GOM did not recommend 'one rank one pension'.

(c) Recommendations of 5th Central Pay Commission (CPC) were implemented with effect from 1.1.1996. Differential in the pension of pre and post 1.1.1996 retirees exists because the 5th CPC did not recommend complete parity.

Rectification of defects in Arjun Tanks

929. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to the reply to unstarred Question 3035 given in the Rajya Sabha on 24th August, 2005 and state:

(a) whether the shortcomings pointed out during the trials of production version of Arjun Tanks in June, 2005, have since been rectified; and

(b) if so, by when the improved and acceptable version of the tank is likely to be brought out and inducted into the army?